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SIPDIS

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SENSITIVE

SINGAPORE FOR ICE  
DEPARTMENT FOR EAP/MTS, G/TIP, PRM AND DS/ATA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PREF](#) [CVIS](#) [KCRM](#) [KJUS](#) [MY](#)

SUBJECT: MALAYSIAN IMMIGRATION REQUESTS TRAINING VISIT TO U.S. PORTS  
OF ENTRY AND DETENTION FACILITIES

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SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUEST  
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¶1. (SBU) This is an action request for ICE Singapore to organize a study visit to the U.S. for Malaysian Immigration officers, with a focus on inspection, detention, removal, and deportation of illegal immigrants; as well as trafficking in persons victim identification and protection. Malaysian Immigration has requested USG assistance in their capacity building efforts in this area, and this is a great opportunity to cement our relationship with this important government agency. End Summary.

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BACKGROUND  
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¶2. (SBU) The Malaysian Department of Immigration (DOI), housed in the Ministry of Home Affairs, is a key player in several areas of great interest to this mission, including refugee resettlement and trafficking in persons (TIP). DOI practice in handling illegal immigrants, refugees, and trafficking victims falls far short of U.S. standards, but we sense a desire to improve among senior DOI officials with whom we interact. The Embassy has worked hard to increase cooperation with DOI, especially over the past year, with a view to helping DOI raise its standards, and we have enjoyed some success. Seeking closer cooperative ties to the U.S., and DOI proposed earlier this year to conclude a MOU on cooperation in immigration affairs. DOI has cooperated overall in Chin resettlement processing, and recently allowed us access to Chin refugees held in immigration detention centers. DOI has also been communicative on the subject in trafficking in persons, and has recently requested U.S. training in trafficking in persons, especially victim identification and care. When it comes to several sensitive cases of American citizens needing permission to enter or leave in unusual circumstances, we have been able to intervene at high enough levels to meet our needs. Immigration senior officers and executives have asked Embassy staff and an ICE Representative from Singapore for a study visit to a domestic ICE office. Malaysia Immigration has indicated to Post that they would pay for up to ten senior level officers from across the directorates within Immigration to travel to the United States. Embassy believes that such a program will strengthen out ties to the DOI, increase DOI's receptivity to further cooperation, and, over the longer term, improve DOI capacities. ICE Singapore is aware and supportive of this request and is uniquely qualified to facilitate this kind of visit.

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PLEASE TRAIN US

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¶3. (SBU) Throughout 2007, in our engagement with Immigration at all levels, the drumbeat has been to get more training for its officers.

From the Home Affairs Deputy Secretary General (the number two civil servant in the Ministry) to the head of the Immigration Department, to his chiefs of Security and Passport, Immigration, to the head officers at Kuala Lumpur International Airport, all have asked for assistance in helping them defend their borders from criminals. The requests are open ended, whether it is document examination, passenger analysis, identifying victims of TIP, or port of entry procedures. Our contacts have presented themselves as sponges, ready to soak up anything we can offer. Immigration has pressed us on several occasions to enter into a shared statement of principles, a Memorandum of Understanding, to formalize this cooperation.

¶4. (SBU) We have responded so far with several home grown courses on U.S. documents, and have sent consular staff to the airport to perform surprise passenger inspection, with the concurrence of Immigration. Earlier this month four nations (the U.S., U.K., Canada and Australia, and including ICE Singapore participation) held a one day course on document analysis for immigration inspectors from four Malaysian international airports that was very well received. We are gaining a good reputation as a training authority, and seek other ways to develop the relationship.

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NEEDS ASSESSMENT  
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¶5. (SBU) While Malaysia's border security systems have some very impressive technological capabilities, senior Immigration officials have expressed their frustration with the quality of information that goes into them. Derogatory information from other government

offices, Interpol notices, and lists of lost/stolen foreign passports are not there for the use of POE inspectors. They have no access to Passenger Name Records (PNRs) that could alert them to suspicious travelers en route. Immigration possesses no real capability to perform secondary inspection. They have no effective way to remove those who have overstayed their visas or arrived without one. Their detention facilities are sorely lacking in managing the large number of detainees who are in removal proceedings. Recently, the government was forced to convert a parking garage at the airport as a temporary housing and processing site for foreigners being returned to their home countries.

¶6. (SBU) Malaysia's immigration problems are driven by its relationship with Indonesia, and actually closely resemble our own. Indonesia is a large, developing country with very porous land and sea borders with Malaysia. Malaysia is a relatively more developed country, with an economic pull to Indonesians to work in jobs such as construction and agriculture that most Malaysians would not take.

There are legal and illegal ways to get this work. Within this relationship, the Department of Immigration is looking to strengthen its capabilities for detection, deterrence, and detention of those found outside the legal working climate. Assistance we provide in this arena will open up doors for us to advance our cooperation in refugee processing, TIP prevention and TIP victim protection, as well as increased capabilities in denying movement of alien smugglers, suspected terrorists, and other transnational criminals.

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PROPOSAL  
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¶7. (U) Immigration senior officers and executives have asked Embassy staff and an ICE Representative from Singapore for a study visit to a domestic ICE office. Specific topics requested include a review of the structure of a domestic ICE office of Investigations, fugitive apprehension operations, worksite enforcement, detention and removal operations, and how the USG works with foreign missions to repatriate or deport those inadmissible aliens. We also should include topics related to trafficking in persons, including victim identification and protection, and refugee protection. Malaysia Immigration has indicated to Post that they would pay for up to ten

senior level officers from across the directorates within Immigration to travel to the United States. ICE Singapore is aware and supportive of this request. ICE Singapore is uniquely qualified to facilitate this kind of visit.

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ACTION REQUEST  
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18. (U) Post requests that ICE Attach Singapore develop an all-encompassing itinerary, including topics of TIP and refugees, for Malaysian Immigration officers to visit the United States. Post requests that ICE Attach Singapore coordinate this visit with ICE Office of International Affairs and relevant ICE domestic offices. Post requests that an ICE Representative with an established relationship with various GoM agencies to escort the GoM delegation. Post understands that all costs incurred by the ICE Representative will be paid for with ICE funding.

19. (U) This request has been coordinated with all relevant offices within the Mission.

KEITH